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PROVISIONAL AGENDA AND ANNOTATIONS, INCLUDING SUGGESTIONS FOR THE ORGANIZATION OF WORK

Note by the Executive Secretary

Addendum

MINISTERIAL ROUND TABLE

1. As indicated in the Executive Secretary's notification of 8 May 1996 to permanent missions regarding the second session of the Conference of the Parties, a ministerial round table will be held on the afternoon of Wednesday, 17 July 1996, the first day of the ministerial segment of the Conference. The following arrangements for the round table have been determined after consultations with the Bureau of the COP, the President-designate and the invited Chairperson.

Purpose

2. The purpose of this round table will be to give ministers an opportunity for informal interaction on political issues arising from the agenda of the Conference. The informality of this exchange is intended to distinguish the round table from the formal policy statements that may be made by ministers during the debate on item 5 of the Conference agenda and from any negotiations or consultations in which ministers may need to engage to conclude the official business of the session.

3. The round table will not adopt any formal conclusions. The Chairperson of the round table will report to the Conference at the beginning of the plenary meeting on Thursday, 18 July 1996, to share her personal impressions of the main trends of the discussion in the round table.

Chairperson

4. The President-designate, Mr. Chen Chimutengwende, Minister of Environment and Tourism, Zimbabwe, has invited Ms. Ruth Dreifuss, Swiss Federal Councillor and Minister of the Environment, to chair the round table.

5. The Chairperson may invite a few ministers to lead off the discussion on different points. She will endeavour to maintain the informality of the discussion and, to this end, limit the duration of interventions.

Participation

6. In keeping with the informality of the occasion, the round table will be held in a specially-arranged conference room and access will be limited to **heads of delegation of ministerial rank**, each accompanied by one or two members of their delegations. Executive heads and chairpersons of partner organizations invited to speak at the opening of the Conference will also be invited to attend the round table as observers and to be available as resource persons who may be called upon by the Chairperson to contribute to the discussion on specific topics. The Convention secretariat will be in attendance. No other delegates or observers at the Conference, or members of the press, will be invited.

7. Special badges will be issued to give access to the round table. The round table will be followed by a reception given by the President of the Conference and the Executive Secretary for all participants in the Conference.

Topics

8. The round table will address the general theme:

"Climate change: new scientific findings and opportunities for action"

which could be developed around the following points and questions:

(a) The Second Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) contains important new findings, further reducing scientific uncertainties regarding climate change, its causes, its impacts and possible response options.

Taking into account the precautionary principle embodied in Article 3.3 of the Convention, does the IPCC Second Assessment Report provide Ministers with added justification for political action to address climate change? How can it be used to better focus and advance global, regional and national strategies and programmes?

(b) The review and synthesis of national communications of Annex I Parties indicate that several of these Parties may have difficulty in meeting the aim of returning their greenhouse gas emissions to 1990 levels by the year 2000, although some of these Parties still consider this aim to be within their reach. Non-Annex I Parties are preparing to submit their initial national communications, in pursuit of their commitments.

What action by Ministers is needed to reaffirm the credibility of the existing commitments of Annex I Parties? What needs to be done to encourage and facilitate the advancement of existing commitments by non-Annex I Parties, in particular with regard to the transfer of, or access to, environmentally-sound technologies and the provision of financial resources?

(c) The process towards strengthening the commitments of Annex I Parties (the Berlin Mandate) has generated a number of options concerning approaches to a protocol or another legal instrument, including policies and measures and quantified emission limitation and reduction objectives.

What action by Ministers is needed to give a new impulse to the negotiating phase of the Berlin Mandate process, so that the outlines of a protocol or other legal instrument may start to emerge at AGBM 5 in December 1996?

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